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You know how they say you need that one friend whom you can talk to? For me, Manny has been that friend. We both bonded over our love for wheels - whether it was fast bikes or the Maruti Suzuki Gypsy that we both had, way back in the 90s! Life's lessons and philosophies were constantly shared while we tuned and talked about engines, waiting patiently in the wings for our dreams to come true; for our vehicles to come with greater horsepower and sometimes, even with a heftier price tag.

With Manny there was always a happy inner connect from the moment we met. Both of us came from similar backgrounds. A stable job with a lifetime of hard work and a good amount stowed away for a rainy day would be the stuff of dreams for most people in our generation, and for most people from backgrounds like ours. Yet, we both knew we had to take those dreams further. We both had to make our parents proud. Yes, I can safely say that Manny and I shared dreams for a future that many people would not have dreamt of.

While I was pursuing my path to establish myself in the city of dreams Mumbai, Manny had started his journey in a world he was born for: the world of numbers. With an association that goes back a solid 25 years, I can safely say that Manny has seen it all. Before Ikigai he was Manny - a

neighbour then and a neighbour now. A friend then, and a friend always.

While I went on to join the world of showbiz, charting my own successful course in the art of storytelling on celluloid, Manny stayed in the world of numbers. He grew steadily from strength to strength, quietly working towards greater goals with each passing year. And having the fortitude to quit at the very top of his banking career, he became the monk who quietly sold his M6 to embrace a philosophy that would set him apart from everyone.

Having watched Manny from a very young age and having shared my dreams with him, I was not surprised at all to find that this positive soul found his release in a philosophy like Ikigai. And only now, I understand how his smiling face and never say die spirit were the right foundation for his Ikigai.

I have watched Manny make the most of these blessings. Never once did he complain or take anything for granted - such is his balanced nature. I can easily and confidently say that he was pre disposed for the life of Ikigai he is leading now. And with the arrival of his son, Sohm, he has found a reason to immerse himself deeper in the practice of Ikigai.

It is amazing how people from the same tribe find their way back as neighbors! So people who vibrate on the same level find a way to connect again and the beauty is we still have

the same interests. And this time, I get to watch him as he pursues his Ikigai with every symptom of an enlightened being who has learnt how to be.

The best part about Manny and the way he practices Ikigai is the fact that he helps people find their happiness and centre as well. He is always on the lookout for an opportunity to lend a helping hand, a listening ear and a shoulder that someone - anyone - can lean on. Whether it is his approach to his work, his travels, the gusto with which he has conquered mountains like Kilimanjaro and the hearts of happy, magical kingdoms like Bhutan - Manny has found and created Ikigai in every quarter of his life. In fact, his connection with nature and the way he has designed his home with minimalistic elements, water, greenery and open beauty is something that I also share a deep passion for!

Read this book not because you are down or low - read this book because it will teach you the value of happiness. Read this book to understand how you can create your own happiness with what you have within you in the here and now. I learn something new from Manny each time I meet him, and I am sure that you will learn something new each time you open this book.

I wish him all the best for his debut book. I hope you enjoy reading this heartfelt and honest account. And I wish you -

the reader - every joy through this powerful and insightful tome on happiness!



John Abraham